

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 6,463,974 to Hellweg et al. in view of United States Patent No. 2,384,402 to Schubert et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that the proposed combination fails to include all of the features defined in independent Claim 1. More specifically, the proposed combination fails to include an annular shell with bent ends “wherein the bent ends only extend in an axial direction at a uniform radial distance from a central axis,” as now defined in amended independent Claim 1.

In contrast, when the device of Hellweg et al. is modified by the Schubert et al., in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the resulting device includes both notches and dished portions. *See e.g.*, April 10, 2009 Office Action, page 6, paragraph 4, lines 6-9 (“Shubert obtains the aforementioned benefits by arranging notches in the flange portions AND dish the form block between said notches. A fair reading of the [Schubert et al.] reference suggests a method in which both techniques are used.”). However, Applicant respectfully submits that with the inclusion of the dished portions on the bent ends, the proposed combination does not include bent ends that “only extend in an axial direction at a uniform radial distance from a central axis.” Instead, the dished portions create a non-uniform radial distance from the central axis. Accordingly, for at least this

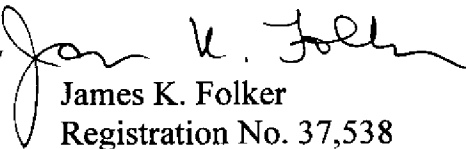
reason, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of this §103 rejection of independent Claim 1 and associated dependent Claims 3-5.

For all of the above reasons, Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

If a Petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response is required to make the attached response timely, it is hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response in the above-identified application for the period required to make the attached response timely. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required to this Application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 07-2069.

Respectfully submitted,

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